

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A label printer for printing on a direct thermal tape in a plurality of colors ~~colours~~, said label printer comprising:
at least one print head for printing an image on said tape in said plurality of colors, said image comprising text and a background ~~colours~~; and
an interface for selecting at least one background color ~~colour~~ and at least one text color ~~colour~~.
2. (Original) A printer as claimed in claim 1, wherein said interface comprises a keyboard.
3. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the printer is arranged to permit the user to select a single color ~~colour~~ for said image and a single different color ~~colour~~ for said background.
4. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein said background comprises one of a pattern, text, image and plain color ~~colour~~.
5. (Currently Amended) A label printer as claimed in claim 1 ~~for printing on a direct thermal tape in a plurality of colours~~, said label printer comprising:
at least one print head for printing a background image; and
at least one different print head for printing a text image.
6. (Currently Amended) A label printer as claimed in claim 1 ~~for printing on a direct thermal tape in a plurality of colours~~, said label printer comprising:
~~at least one print head for printing an image on said tape,~~
further comprising a controller so that the ~~wherein~~ a background is printed in a first color ~~colour~~ and an image is printed in a second color ~~colour~~.

7. (Currently Amended) A label printer for printing on a direct thermal tape in a plurality of colours, said label printer comprising; at least one print head, said print head having a plurality of printing elements, wherein at least some of said printing elements are individually controllable and at least some of said printing elements are ~~divided into at least one group which are~~ commonly controlled.

8. (Currently Amended) A label printer of claim 7 ~~for printing on a direct thermal tape in a plurality of colours, said label printer comprising;~~
~~at least one print head,~~ said print head having a number of printing elements such that the print head can print across the entire width of said tape, said print head having a plurality of printing elements which are individually controllable, said individually controllable printing elements corresponding to a part of the print head which is arranged to print an image on said tape and at least one group of printing elements which are commonly controlled and which correspond to a part of the print head which is arranged to print a background on said tape between said image and at least one of said upper and lower edges of said tape.

9. (Original) A tape supply for use in a tape printing apparatus, said tape supply comprising a roll of direct thermal image tape, said direct thermal image tape comprising a plurality of thermally activated colourants and at least one developer for producing a multi coloured image on said direct thermal image tape when said direct thermal image tape is heated.

10. (Currently Amended) A tape supply of claim 9 ~~for use in a tape printing apparatus, said tape supply comprising a roll of direct thermal image tape, said direct thermal image tape comprising a plurality of thermally activated colourants and at least one developer for producing a multi coloured image on said direct thermal image tape when said direct thermal image tape is heated,~~ said tape further comprising an outer protective layer.

11. (Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 10, wherein said protective layer

comprises polyolefin or polypropylene.

12. (Currently Amended) A tape supply as claimed in claim 10 ~~or 11~~, wherein said protective layer is arranged to contact a print head in use.

13. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 10 to 11~~ of claim 12, wherein said protective layer has a thickness of between 3 and 15 micrometers.

14. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 10 to 11~~ of claim 13, wherein a removable backing layer is provided, opposite to said protecting layer.

15. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 10 to 11~~ of claim 14, wherein a portion of said tape supply is cut off to form a label.

16. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 10 to 14~~ of claim 10, wherein a top surface of said protective layer is coated with ~~in~~ a friction reducing material.

17. (Currently Amended) A tape supply of claim 9 ~~as claimed in any of claims 9 to 16~~, wherein said thermally activated colourants comprise dyes.

18.(Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 17, wherein said dyes comprise leuco dyes.

19. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 9 to 17~~ of claim 18, wherein each respective thermally activated colourant has a different activation temperature at which a color ~~colour~~ is formed whereby in use any one of the thermally activated colourants can be individually activated to produce a color ~~colour~~ without activating the other thermally activated colourants.

20. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 9 to 19~~ of claim 9,

wherein said tape is adapted to produce a multi coloured image by one or more of thermal diffusion, chemical dissolution, melting transitions and chemical thresholds.

21. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 9 to 20~~ of claim 20, wherein said tape comprises a substrate layer, and a print layer comprising an image-forming layer.

22. (Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 21, wherein said image-forming layers comprise one or more of a dispersion of solid material, an encapsulated liquid, amorphous materials, solid materials, solutions of activatable materials and polymeric binders.

23. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 9 to 22~~ of claim 20, wherein the tape comprises an upper image-forming layer being selectively activatable to produce a color ~~colour~~ by applying heat to the tape at a temperature T1 for a time period t1 and a lower image-forming layer being selectively activatable to produce a color ~~colour~~ by applying heat to the tape at a temperature T2 for a time period t2 wherein $T1 > T2$ and $t1 < t2$, whereby in use either of the upper or lower layers can be activated separately from the other.

24. (Currently Amended) A tape supply ~~as claimed in any of claims 9 to 23~~ of claim 20, wherein said tape comprises a plurality of image-forming layers, wherein each respective image-forming layer contains a different thermally activated colourant.

25. (Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 24, wherein said tape comprises one or more spacer layers, each spacer layer being disposed between said image-forming layers.

26. (Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 25, wherein the one or more spacer layers comprise one or more of a thermally inert material, a material which undergoes a phase change on heating by a thermal print head, a thermal solvent and a polymeric material.

27. (Currently Amended) A tape supply as claimed in claim 25 ~~or claim 26~~, wherein

the thickness and the thermal conductivity of the one or more spacer layers is selected whereby in use any one of the thermally activated colourants can be individually activated to produce a color ~~colour~~ without activating the other thermally activated colourants.

27. (Currently Amended) A tape supply as claimed in claim ~~any of claims 10 to 26~~, wherein said tape comprises: a substrate layer having an upper and a lower surface; a first image-forming layer disposed on the upper surface of the substrate layer; a first spacer layer disposed on the first image forming layer; and a second image-forming layer disposed on the spacer layer.

28. (Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 27, wherein an adhesive layer is disposed on the lower surface of the substrate layer and a base layer is disposed on the adhesive layer, said base layer being removable to expose the adhesive layer for attachment of said tape to a surface.

29. (Currently Amended) A tape supply as claimed in ~~claim 27 or~~ claim 28, wherein a second spacer layer is disposed on the second image-forming layer and a third image-forming is disposed on the second spacer layer.

30. (Currently Amended) A tape supply as ~~claimed in any of claims 9 to 29~~ of claim 18, wherein said tape comprises a plurality of developers, each developer having a different activation temperature.

31. (Original) A tape supply as claimed in claim 30, wherein each developer is disposed in a different image-forming layer in said tape.

32. (Currently Amended) A tape cassette for use in a tape printing apparatus, said tape cassette comprising a body housing a supply of direct thermal image tape according to claim 9 ~~any of claims 9 to 31~~.

33. (Original) A tape cassette as claimed in claim 32, wherein said cassette comprises an

indicating means for indicating the type of direct thermal image tape housed in the cassette.

34. (Currently Amended) A tape cassette as claimed in claim ~~33~~ 32, wherein said indicating means are arranged to provide information as to the colors ~~colours~~ available from said direct thermal image receiving tape.

35. (Currently Amended) A tape printer comprising a tape supply receiving portion for receiving a supply of tape, a print head comprising a plurality of printing elements for printing an image on a tape, a drive means for driving a tape passed the print head and a control means for controlling the plurality of printing elements, wherein the control means is adapted to control the printing elements for producing a multicoloured image on a tape or claim 9 by direct thermal transfer.

36. (Original) A tape printer according to claim 35, wherein said control means is adapted to produce a multicoloured image on a tape by direct thermal transfer in a single pass.

37. (Currently Amended) A tape printer according to ~~claim 35 or~~ claim 36, wherein said control means is adapted to control the printing elements according to data input to the tape printer.

38. (Currently Amended) A tape printer according to ~~any one of claims 35 to~~ claim 37, wherein said control means is a processor.

39. (Currently Amended) A tape printer according to ~~any one of claims 35 to~~ claim 38, wherein said control means is adapted to control the temperature of each printing element.

40. (Currently Amended) A tape printer according to ~~any one of claims 35 to~~ claim 39, wherein said control means is adapted to control the time period each printing element is heated.

41. (Currently Amended) A tape printer according to claim 37 ~~any one of claims 35 to~~

40, wherein said control means comprises a memory storing at least one of temperature, heating period and color ~~colour~~ data which is accessible to select a temperature and heating period for each printing element according to data input to the printer.

42. (Currently Amended) A tape printer according to ~~any one of claims 35 to 41~~, wherein said memory stores at least one of temperature, heating period and color ~~colour~~ data for different types of direct thermal tape.

43. (Original) A tape printer according to claim 42, wherein said printer comprises a detection means for detecting the type of direct thermal tape inserted in the printer and wherein the detecting means sends a signal to the control means whereby the data corresponding to the detected tape type is selected.

44. (Original) A tape printer as claimed in claim 43, wherein said tape printer is arranged to detect if a thermal transfer tape material has been installed in said tape printer and to control the tape printer accordingly.

45. (Original) A method of printing a label comprising driving a direct thermal tape passed a thermal print head and controlling the print head whereby a multicoloured image is produced on the tape by direct thermal transfer in a single pass.

46. (Currently Amended) In combination, a tape printer as claimed in claim 1 ~~any of claims 1 to 8 or 35 to 44~~, with a tape supply as claimed in claim 9 ~~any of claims 9 to 34~~.

47. (Original) A label printer for printing, said label printer comprising:

at least one print head for printing an image ,whereby a background of one label is different to that of a second, subsequent label; and

cutting means for providing a cut on either side of a region between said first and second labels, where said first and second backgrounds meet.

48. (Original) A printer as claimed in claim 47, wherein the at least one print head is

arranged to print information on said region between said first and second labels.

49. (Original) A printer as claimed in claim 47, wherein at least one of said cuts is a partial cut.

50. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in claim 47 ~~or 49~~, wherein at least one of said cuts is a full cut.

51. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in claim 48 ~~any of claims 47 to 50~~, comprising reversing means for reversing image receiving medium on which said labels are arranged to be printed.

52. (Original) A printer as claimed in claim 51, wherein said reversing means are arranged to reverse said medium from the cutting means to said at least one print head.

53. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in claim 49 ~~any of claims 47 to 52~~, wherein at least one of said at least one print heads is arranged to start printing an image on said image receiving medium on one side of a partial cut provided by said cutting means and to continue printing on the other side of said partial cut.

54. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in claim 47 ~~any of claims 47 to 53~~, wherein said cutting means is arranged to provide a cut, said cut being at a position such that one background extends both sides of said cut.

55. (Original) A printer as claimed in claim 54, wherein said one background extends only a relatively small distance on one side of said cut.

56. (Currently Amended) A printer as claimed in claim 47 ~~any of claims 47 to 55~~, wherein at least one print head is arranged to print backgrounds on said first and second labels in different colors ~~colours~~.

57. (Original) A label printer for printing an image, said label printer comprising:
at least one print head for printing on a tape a first image for a first label and a second
different image for a second label, said first and second labels being adjacent; and
cutting means for providing a cut on either side of a region between said first and second
labels, where said first and second images meet.

58. (Original) A method of printing an image comprising the steps of:
printing a first label on a supply of continuous tape; and
moving the tape to a printing position for printing a second label, initial
printing being on one side of a partial cut and subsequent printing being on another side of
said partial cut.

59. (Original) A method as claimed in claim 58, comprising the step of:
cutting at least partially said tape when said image has been printed, said cut being
through said image.

60. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in claim 58 ~~or 59~~, wherein said cut is
through a background image.

61. (Original) A label printer for printing an image on a label, said printer comprising:
printing means for printing an image on said label, said printing means having a
length, said length being greater than a corresponding dimension of said label, wherein
when a background image is printed on said label, said printing means is controlled to print
said background image over a length at least equal to said corresponding dimension of
label.

62. (Original) A label printer as claimed in claim 61, wherein said printing means
comprises printing elements and said printing means is arranged to print said background
image by activating a number of printing elements sufficient to print said image over said
length at least equal to the corresponding dimension of label.

63. (Currently Amended) A label printer as claimed in claim 61 ~~or 62~~, wherein said background image is arranged to be printed over a length greater than said corresponding dimension of label.

64. A printer as claimed in ~~any of claims 47 to 57 or 61 to~~ claim 63, wherein said printer is arranged to print a colour image.